

5 1915

THE
HARDSHIPS

Occasioned by the

OATHS

To the Present

GOVERNMENT

Consider'd and Argu'd.

By a WELL-WISHER to his COUNTRY.

The Fourth Edition, Corrected.

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Occasionally by the

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OATHS, &c.



NOATH is one of the most solemn Acts of Worship we are capable of. It is a direct Appeal to **GOD** the Searcher of Hearts, for the Truth of what we declare, and the Sincerity of our Intentions in what we engage by his Help to perform;
* *with an Invocation of his Vengeance upon us, and freely Subjecting ourselves to it in Case we act deceitfully, or fail in the Execution of what we have promis'd.* And accordingly, if herein a Person shall take the Name of **GOD** in vain, that is, lightly and rashly, or shall knowingly and willingly falsify his Oath, He hath assur'd us, He will not hold that Man guiltless, but will most certainly punish him. This being

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[†] This is imply'd in all Oaths.

ing the Nature of an Oath, there is no Man that ponders ever so little upon it, and is not lost to all Sense of GOD and Religion, but must feel an Awe seizing his Spirit, from a Conviction both of the Greatness and the Danger of the Sin of *Perjury*.

THE End of GOD's Instituting an Oath, says the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is for Confirmation to put an End to all Strife, Heb. vi. 16. And this it does, by Laying us under the *strongest* Obligations possible, to declare the Truth, and perform what we promise. For a Person can do no more than pawn his Body and Soul, *all his Happiness* here and hereafter, upon the Truth and Sincerity of what he hath said and engag'd to do. Bringing the Case to GOD, is the last Resort, therefore whatever be the Dispute, here it ends; till a Man shall have evidently broken his Oath, and then he hath render'd himself the worst of Mankind, an odious and detestable Creature, worthy of nothing but to be driven from human Society with all the Marks of Publick Infamy and Indignation; to be expos'd to the Curse of GOD, and Punishments from Men in this World, and everlasting Damnation in another.

THE Reasons and Purposes for which the present Oaths are tendred, are, That we may vow *Allegiance* to King GEORGE, testify our *Abhorrence* of *Popery*, renounce the *Pretender*, and oblige ourselves to maintain and defend the *Protestant Succession* as settled by Parliament, against the said *Pretender*, and all other Persons whatsoever. And that all these might in the most effectual Manner be provided for, it seems the Oaths have been
studiously

studiously fram'd, in the plainest, most express and significant Terms that can be, with *profess'd Design*, and on Purpose to prevent its being in the Power of any Man (how much soever inclin'd) to prevaricate or dissemble, and that every One to whom they are tendred might find himself under a Necessity either to refuse them, or in Conscience to observe and fulfil the Contents of them.

HAVING said thus much of the Nature of an Oath in general, and of the Oaths requir'd by the Government; I shall now specify some of the *Hardships* occasion'd by them, which are very manifest.

ONE Hardship, is, *The great Danger of Incurring the dreadful Sin of Prejury.* The Reason is, Because that after a Person hath taken these Oaths, if he shall not strictly observe and keep them, according to the true Intent and plain Meaning of them, he will be infallibly guilty of this Sin. To instance only in the Oath of *Abjuration*: If upon taking this Oath, he does not in his Conscience believe King GEORGE to be his Rightful and Lawful King, he falsifies what he declares upon Oath, and therefore is guilty of PERJURY. If he does not in his Conscience believe, That the Person taking upon himself the Style and Title of King of England, by the Name of James the Third, or of Scotland, by Name of James the Eighth, hath no Right or Title whatsoever to the Crown of this Realm, and accordingly refuse Allegiance to him; he is guilty of PERJURY. If he do not bear Faith and true Allegiance to King GEORGE, and to the utmost of his Power defend the said King GEORGE against all traiterous Conspiracies
and

and Attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against his Person, Crown and Dignity, he is guilty of PERJURY. If he do not to the utmost of his Power, support, maintain and defend the Succession of the Crown as settled by Act of Parliament, against him the said James, and all other Persons whatsoever, he is guilty of PERJURY. If he shall cherish any Thoughts derogatory from the Tenour of this Oath, if he shall openly or secretly do any Thing to the Prejudice of King GEORGE, if he shall directly, or by *Innuendo* only, speak or write, or pray or preach against his Person, Crown or Dignity, or shall by any Means deliberately and willingly conceal, countenance, assist, or abett others in doing the same : Nay, if on the contrary, he shall not to the utmost of his Power make known, discover, discourage and oppose them, he is guilty of PERJURY. In all these Cases he breaks his Oath, and leaves himself expos'd to the heavy Curses which are imprecated upon those, that shall not in all Things conform themselves thereto according to the plain and common Sense and Understanding of the Words.

BUT with what Colour or Pretence can they do this, that believe in their Consciences the Pretender to be their lawful and rightful King, or that are possess'd with a Belief, that King GEORGE hath *no Right or Title* to the Crown of these Realms ? Must it not be a Hardship, yea, the greatest Hardship in the World, to swear that which they do not believe ?

BUT if to preserve the Peace of their Minds, they have, or shall refuse the Oaths ; why then they fall under a very great Hardship on that Hand.

Hand. For hereby they have, or will expose themselves as *ill-affected to the Government*; and if at any Time they shall happen to say or do any Thing that is against the *Title, Crown or Dignity of King GEORGE*, or against the *Protestant Succession*, they are liable to be inform'd against by every One, (who is oblig'd by his Oath to make them known,) and to be prosecuted accordingly. Nay, upon the bare *Refusing* of the Oaths when tendred to them, they are adjudg'd *Popish Recusants convict*, and to be proceeded against, as the Law in that Case has directed. Hereby they will become *incapable of having or holding any Office, Employment, &c. under the Crown*. They will be disabled to sue or use any *Action, Bill, Plaint, or Information in Course of Law*, or to prosecute any *Suit in any Court of Equity*, or to be *Guardian of any Child, or Executor or Administrator of any Person, or capable of any Legacy or Deed of Gift*. And if they hold any Office after such Refusal, being convicted thereof, they will forfeit the Sum of 500 Pounds, besides several other Penalties they are liable to.

Now rather than undergo these Hardships, many have been tempted to wrong their Consciences. To instance only in what has lately happen'd. There are more than probable Reasons inducing us to believe, that in order to gain so small a Post as that of a *Common-Council-Man*, some have forsworn themselves, and a great many more have done the like in voting for 'em. Which is no Proof (whilst by *Words and Actions* they demonstrate the contrary) that they are grown better *Friends to King GEORGE*, but are rather thereby become more *dangerous Enemies*.

This has brought them under another very great Hardship,

Hardship, by putting their *Minds upon the Rack* to find out some Expedients to defend what they have done in order to preserve their Secular Concerns, and secure the Influence they might have on publick Affairs. I shall mention some of those I have met with, and inquire into the Validity of them.

ONE is, That they swear to King GEORGE, as King in Possession only. But this is contrary to the End and express Words of the Oath, which is fram'd on Purpose to assert King GEORGE's Right. For it obliges them to swear expressly, That they do in their Consciences believe before GOD and the World, That King GEORGE is rightful and lawful King of this Realm, which is more than King in Possession. And in relation to the Pretender, the Oath obliges them to declare, That they believe in their Conscience that he hath not any Right or Title whatsoever to the Crown of this Realm; and not only so, but to renounce, refuse and abjure any Allegiance or Obedience to him. And lastly, They have sworn to support, maintain and defend the Succession of the Crown to the utmost of their Power against the said Pretender, and all other Persons whatsoever, which Succession is, and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress and Dutchess Dowager of Hanover, and the Heirs of her Body, being Protestants.

So that neither in the Life-time of King GEORGE, nor after his Death, can they favour in the least the Interests of the Pretender, but they are immediately forsworn. And is not this a great Hardship upon many?

ANOTHER Expedient made use of, is, Not to repeat the Oath when read to them, or stop when they

they come to those Words, *King GEORGE*, or instead of *King GEORGE*, to say only *his Majesty*, or *the King* (by whom, some will say, they mean the Pretender) and also to stop at those Words that make express Mention of the Pretender; which they may sometimes do, if not narrowly observ'd.

BUT this can afford no *Salvo* to their Consciences. For it were quite to destroy the *Design and End* of all Oaths, and particularly of this, which expressly guards against any *Equivocation, mental Evasion, or secret Reservation* whatsoever: And therefore to act with *Equivocation* or *mental Evasion*, at the very Time they swear to do it *without* any such Thing, is so far from excusing the Sin of *Perjury*, that it does but render it *infinitely* more heinous. And besides, there is no Man that hath appear'd upon the Summons, and laid his Hands upon the *Gospels*, can evade the Obligations he comes under thereby to *King GEORGE*; for allowing him to have *said nothing*, but laid his Hand upon the Book only, that *Action* in all *equitable Construction*, must be taken as the Testimony of his *Consent*, and indeed the *Person himself* would have it so to be understood. The Oaths having been read to him under these Circumstances, he is *actually* sworn to *King GEORGE*, because having made *no Objection* after *so much* Time allow'd him for Consideration, (the Oaths having been sent him before-hand) and having conform'd to the *Substance* of the *Action*, the *Omitting* a single Circumstance in this Case, will not absolve him from what the Oaths require.

THE last and *most common* Expedient is, That a Force is put upon them, and therefore *the Sin is not to be imputed to them that have taken the Oaths, but to the Imposers of them.* They that say this, do but too plainly *confess* they have *forsworn* themselves, only they have found out this Way as the *best* to *bush* their Consciences. But how palpably fallacious is this! Indeed in *Negative Cases*, when Persons refuse their Compliance with Things *sinful*, how strictly soever enjoin'd by *Human Laws*, they may justify their Refusal upon Principles of *Reason*, of *Scripture*, and from the *Practice* of the best of Men; and tho' charg'd with Sin for their Disobedience to those Laws, they may clear themselves, and turn the Charge upon their Accusers for *imposing* Things *contrary to the Law of G O D.* But in *positive Actions*, and in a Matter so sacred as an Oath, to act falsely, and then put the Guilt of it upon publick Authority, (which requires from them a *true*, not a *false* Oath) how great a Fascination is it owing to!

BUT what could we do, may some say, seeing to refuse the Oaths would expose us to such severe Penalties? To which the Answer readily offers. Better suffer any *outward* Hardship and Inconvenience than *wrong* your Consciences. Nor will the Pleading Force, be an Excuse in this Case: For G O D having given us his *Holy Word*, and implanted in every Man a *Conscience*, as the *Principle* and *Rule* of his Actions, by which he shall be *judg'd* at the last Day, he is to govern himself, not according to the Posture of his *Temporal Interests*, but according to what his *Conscience* and the *Word* of G O D do tell him is his Duty. So that as we shall answer it to *Him*, we are bound *at all Hazards* to refuse every Thing

Thing we cannot do with a *clear* and *safe* Conscience ; If it were not so, there need be no Suffering for the Sake of a *good Conscience*. Then the Primitive Christians and all holy Men are to blame for having suffer'd on the Score of it. Besides, to imagine People at Liberty for the Sake of their *worldly Interests*, to bely their Consciences, were to justify all the Diffimulation and Hypocrisy that ever was in the World : It were to pluck up Religion by the *Root*, and even to destroy the *Foundation* and *Band* of human Society ; for then Persons might lye, break their Promises and Covenants, cheat their Neighbours, yea, swear them out of their Estates and Lives, and come off with a Pretence, that for the Sake of their worldly Interest they were *forc'd* to do it. But who sees not the *wicked Absurdity*, and pernicious Consequence of this ? It must then be necessarily yielded, that Conscience being the *only natural fixed Principle and Band* of Duty to GOD and each other, we must strictly follow it ; and a Wrong done hereto, can in *no Case* be excus'd, and least of all in that of a false Oath, which is the greatest Violation of it that can be, and even destroys it.

ONE would think there needs no Enlargement on another Expedient that has been too commonly used, because there is *no Argument* in it, and it sufficiently exposes itself, and this is, *Casting away all Concern about the Matter*, with a silly Banter, and a ridiculous Proposal to go and wash it down with a *Glass of Wine*, or fetch it off again with a Dose of *Carduus*. Thus instead of showing any *Remorse* at what they have done, many are not afraid, to add to the Sin of *PERJURY*, that of the most *impudent Profaneness*. How tremendous

an Instance is this of the Degeneracy of the present Age ! It is notorious not only from Scripture, but profane History, what Reverence and Regard has been always paid to an Oath, even by the *darkest Heathens*, as well as those that have enjoy'd the *Light of Revelation*. But was ever such monstrous Iniquity known in a *Christian Nation*, that Men shall go and solemnly *forswear themselves*, and then come forth and *publish* their horrid Guilt, making it at the same time Matter of their Sport and ⁱLaughter ! What greater Contempt are they capable of putting upon GOD ? And what must fill up *the Measure of a Peoples Iniquity* if this does not ? This is to go a Length beyond the *Devils themselves*, who must have some *juster Thoughts* amidst all their Wickedness, since *they* are said to *believe and tremble*. O LORD, what Judgments may we fear do hang over this *City and Nation* were it only for this Sin of *PERJURY*, by which we have rendred ourselves *infamous* above any People, and *now* in an Instance that scarce has its *Parallel*.

UPON the Whole, Nothing is more manifest, than that *They* who have not been *free and hearty* in taking the Oaths to King GEORGE, and do not resolve in *all Points* to keep them to the *utmost of their Power*, but think to excuse themselves by those sorry *Jesuitical Shifts* that have been mention'd, or any others they have in Reserve, are notwithstanding most certainly *forsworn*, and can never clear themselves from this most *grievous and damnable Sin*, but will *increase* it, the more they shall study and go about to *excuse* it. And is it not then a *most dreadful Case* to be under such Circumstances, as neither to be able to refuse the Oaths, nor to take them without *apparent Hazard* to the Interests both of

of Body and Soul? For by refusing the Oaths they will betray at least the *Spirit of Rebellion*, and by taking them they will unavoidably run into the Sin of *PERJURY*; either of which, if not repented of, have in their Nature the *strangest* Tendency and Influence to hasten *Ruin* upon them in this World and that which is to come. These are some of the *Hardships*, most evidently occasion'd by the Tender of the present Oaths.

WHEREFORE by this Time it must be highly proper to enquire into the *Grounds* and *Causes* of these Grievances, and we cannot be at a Loss about them. That which offers itself as the more *immediate Cause* of these Hardships which People have brought upon themselves, is, The *Dislike* they have conceiv'd of King *GEORGE* and his Government. The *remoter Causes* are those *wicked Methods* that have been taken to corrupt and poison their Minds with *wrong Notions* of our Constitution, to possess them with *groundless Jealousies* of the Church's Danger, and to *alienate their Affections* from the Person and Family of King *GEORGE*. The *Instruments* engag'd herein were those *miserable Tools* made use of by the *late Ministry*, who took care to encourage none in the Affair, but such as by the *extream Debauchery* of their Principles they knew to be *well qualify'd* for the Purpose, and who would stick at *Nothing*, tho' ever so base and dishonourable, false and ridiculous, repugnant and absurd to serve the Design, which now every One may see was to set aside the *Protestant Succession*, and bring in the *Preterender*.

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BUT of *all* the *Tools* that have been employ'd, there are none who, by means of their *Office, Character* and *Opportunities*, have had *more* Advantage, or acted with *greater* Success than the *Higb-flying* and *Jacobite* CLERGY, who by their *Preaching, Printing, Progress-making, Conversation* and *Example* have done more to pervert the People than any other Set of Men whatsoever. I should be the last Man that would speak or think disrespectfully of the *sacred Office* (for which I have the *highest Veneration* in the World) yet it cannot but raise a *just Indignation* in me, as well as it must do in the Breast of every *honest Man*, to see after what an *indecent Manner*, and by what *vile* and *wicked* Methods, they have abus'd and prostituted their *most holy Function*; and all this under Colour of *Zeal* for the *Church*, to destroy the *Constitution* both in *Church* and *State*. It is but expressing a *due Concern* for the *Honour* of the *Office*, to expose these Men as the *Shame* of their Order.

I must say then, That all the Mischiefs that have been, or may *further* happen, are owing to these Men, as the *chief Instruments* thereof. And were I to address myself to them, I could say it, as a Man *griev'd* at the Calamities that have, and may be further brought upon his Country; 'tis *YOU*, whose *Place* it was to have *prevented* these Evils, that have had the *chief Hand* in bringing them upon us. If the People are found in *Rebellion*, 'tis mainly by *YOUR Instigation*; if they cannot take the Oaths, 'tis by the *Prejudices* *YOU* have instill'd into them; if they suffer for *not Swearing*, *YOU* are the *Causes* of it; if they *forswear* themselves, *YOU* have been the *Occasion*; if, upon Reflection, there shall any *smite* on their *Breast*, saying, *what have we done?* If they shall

shall run into *Despair*, YOU must have a large Share in the *Blame* of it, and all the *dismal Consequences* that may follow. In short, if any of them shall by these Means be ruin'd both in this and another World, they will lay their *Destruction*, in a great measure, at YOUR Door, and GOD will require their *Blood* at YOUR Hands.

AND put Case, that any of these poor Souls, convinc'd of their *Rebellion* and *Perjury*, should in their Distress apply to you for Relief, What Method would you take with them? Would you make a short Work on't, and bid 'em go hang themselves? This would as little suit your *Character*, as they would give you Thanks for it. Would you put a further Cheat upon them, by making them believe you have a Power to *absolve* them? Can you do it whether they *repent* of their Sins or not? If so, What is this but to encourage Men in the Practice of all the *Villanies* in the World, and then to come to you for *Absolution*? If you tell them they must repent, Why did you not *prevent* this their Sin, by instilling better Principles into them; or at least, by taking due Care they did not forswear themselves? But instead of this, Have you not shewn them the way to it by your own wicked Example? Who (notwithstanding ALL that the People have observ'd and known YOU to have said and done against the Government) could at last *very peaceably* swear to it yourselves, except a few that have *Sculkt* out of the way for a time, to keep their *Livings*, and are profess'd Enemies to King GEORGE. What Reflections will you make, when possibly, after a While, you shall see the Distresses and Hardships you have brought poor People into, and that there are no Men so deep in the *Guilt* of it as your selves.

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HAVING trac'd these Evils to their main *Springs* and *Causes*, 'tis now very proper to enquire, What *Remedy* is fit to be propos'd, in order to cure what is *past*, and prevent the like *Mischiefs* for *Time* to come.

As for those that know themselves in the *Interests* of the *Pretender*, and yet have taken the Oaths to King GEORGE, they must be *conscious* of their Sin, and after what has been said, they can have *no Cloak* for it; There is no *Shifting* it off. The *Guilt* of *Perjury* is bound *fast* upon them with all the *Circumstances* that can well be imagin'd to make it most frightful and hainous. Wherefore there is no *Remedy* left them, but that of a *sound Repentance*. After they have incurr'd this abominable *Iniquity*, can they possibly think to *elude* the *Punishment*? Let them reflect a little on their Oath: Did they not invoke GOD as a *Witness* to the Truth of what they said, and *subject* themselves *freely* to his *Vengeance*, if they fail'd in the *Execution*? * " Wherefore by thus failing, they consent to be " pursu'd and overwhelm'd with his terrible *Judg-* " *ments*. What brutish *Stupidity* would it be to en- " *tertain* the least *Doubt*, whether this will ac- " *cordingly* happen? What *Idea* must we have of " *GOD*, how must we *affront* and *insult* Him, if " *we* believe not that He will surely keep his " *Word*? " They that have forsworn themselves have most certainly *damn'd* their *Souls*, and *ex-* *pos'd* their *Persons* and *Concerns*, *even in this World*, to GOD's heavy *Judgments* without *speedy* *Repen-*

tance: They might tremble every Hour and others for them, least some heavy Stroke of his Vengeance pursue and overtake them. There is no Way of Escape but ~~that~~ we have mentioned, nor will God be put off with a ~~mock~~ Repentance any more than a false Oath. It must be a sound and thorough one, and which I affirm can never be, unless it bear some Proportion in the *Bitterness* of it to the *hinousness* of the Offence, and be attended with such Marks of Regret and Sorrow as shall render the same as publick as the Sin has been open and Scandalous. And as the Nature of true Repentance consists not only in a hearty Shame and Sorrow for what we have done, but in the *undoing* it again as far as possible, it necessarily follows that they who would repent of this dreadful Sin, must renounce and retract what they have done, and give Glory to God by taking Shame to themselves as *openly* as they have done Him Dishonour. They must declare to the World the *Abhorrence* they have conceiv'd of their great Iniquity. It must be a *publick Reparation* as far as in them is possible. To think to compound with God by a *Secret Confession* for an open and Scandalous Sin, or by following the *Popish Practice* of receiving Absolution from the Priests contrary to the *approved Principles* of Protestants is to fall under a *strong and fatal Delusion*. And I do further affirm that no Man can be said truly to have repented of his Sin, who holding any *Publick Place* or Office under King GEORGE by means of a false Oath does not either immediately quit that Place and Employment, or behave himself in all things according to the *real Intention* of the Oath as it was tender'd to him. For he that shall hold any Place, and does not bear true Allegiance to King GEORGE, is manifestly guilty of PERJURY. And he that lives in the

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daily Commission of Sin can never be said to repent of it. I am griev'd to see how *easily* People have fallen under Guilt, and am sensible it is not so easy to recover 'em from it; but the more difficult this is like to prove the more should *every One*, in his Place, be ready to afford his *best* Help: And of all Men there are none so *capable*, or are more *oblig'd*, and ought consequently to be more *concern'd* to do this than the CLERGY; and those of 'em more especially, that are *conscious* to themselves of the great *Hand* they have had in bringing this heavy Load upon them. These ought in the first place *publickly* to retract *their own* Oaths, beg Pardon of God and *Man*, if *peradventure* their great *Iniquity* may be forgiven 'em, and chuse rather to suffer any *Penalties*, than live in Sin, as they must do, so long as they cannot bear *true Allegiance* to the King they have *sworn* to. Or if having seen their Errors they shall return to their Duty, it will not be enough to come home *themselves*, unless they endeavour to bring along with them *those poor thoughtless Sheep* they have caused to wander, and use as much *yea more* Diligence herein than ever they did to seduce them. Till something of this Nature be effectually done, what can we expect other than the *surest Judgments* of GOD to break out upon us.

WITH respect to them *that have not yet taken the Oaths*, and *scruple* 'em, 'tis certain they ought to *forbear* till they can do it *truly* and *faithfully*. I say not this to *affright* or *drive* People from their Allegiance to King GEORGE, but only to put them upon using *proper Means* to have their Minds *instructed* and *satisfy'd*. For I must say, That altho' their forbearing the Oaths will save them from the Sin of *P E R J U R Y*, yet will it not from another,

ther, viz. Their *Refusing Allegiance* to King George, who (if their *Rightful and Lawful King*) has a Right and Power to demand their *Allegiance*; and they, as the Apostle speaks, are bound to submit for the Lord's sake, 1 Pet. iii. 13. Their not doing so is a Sin against God, as well as it betrays a Spirit of Rebellion against their Prince, and forfeits the Protection of the Government. It is therefore their Interest as well as Duty to study this Point, and herein to get the best Information they are capable of. In order to which, they ought not to give way to unreasonable and groundless Prejudices, to be guided merely by Party-Noise or Interest, to receive their Instruction from every paltry Pamphlet, or scurrilous Lampoon, to admit of every idle and impertinent Story, tho' from the Pulpit, fram'd on purpose to beget Suspicions and Jealousies, and to raise Dislike against the Person and Family, which God in his wonderful Providence has sent to rule over us; but laying all these aside, to get the best Information they can from Scripture, Reason, and Those who must be allow'd to understand best our Constitution and Government, calmly and sedately to hear what is offer'd, maturely to consider it, and to allow every Thing its due Weight, in order to obtain a clear Understanding, and full Conviction of their Duty. Were this Method follow'd, it would go a great Way to remove Mens Scruples, insomuch as that to One that is for the Pretender, I am perswaded there would soon be a Hundred against him.

Now they that shall consult the Scriptures and make a right Use of their Reason, will find that GOVERNMENT in all the several Forms of it, and Methods of Succession to it, are as the Apostle speaks, The Ordinance of Man, 1 Pet. ii. 17. that is, as

* *Dr. Boulter very well explains it, such as Men have contriv'd, consented to, or acquiesced in; and owes its Original to Law, Custom or Agreement.*
 " For if (as the Doctor truly says) *Government*
 " and *all its Forms and Methods*, be from *GOD*,
 " exclusive of Man's Will or Wisdom *at all inter-*
 " *medling*, there can be but *one Form* of Govern-
 " ment, and Extent of Power in the Governor, or
 " Governors, *lawful*; and all Nations, who are
 " governed *otherwise* than in that *one Form*, disobey
 " the Will of *GOD*; or else it must be pretended,
 " That *GOD* has by a *Revelation of his Will* esta-
 " blish'd *one Form* of Government in one Nation,
 " another in another; the *contrary* of which is so
 " evident, that none ever pretended to affirm, He
 " had done so." This Consideration, if duly
 weigh'd, must oblige us to acknowledge, that tho'
 Government in general be of *divine Appointment*;
 yet that the Government of particular Countries and
 Nations, does arise from the *Constitutions, Customs,*
Consent and Agreement of Men. But then, that
 the several Governors, constituted in these parti-
 cular Nations and Countries, are so far approv'd of
GOD, as that Submission ought to be paid to
 them, in all Things *lawful, for the Lord's Sake.*

IF we would know then, who are our *Lawful*
 Governours, it must be learn'd from the *Custom,*
Laws and Constitution of our Countrey. Now if
 we would know the *Custom, Laws and Constituti-*
 on of our Country from those that are *best acquainted*
 with them, we shall find, they admit of no such
Thing as Indefeasible Hereditary Right, (by which
 only the Pretender claims to the Crown) but that
 it has been all along in the Power of the States of
 the

* See Dr. Boulter's Sermon on 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.

the Kingdom, for very weighty and very important Causes, to exclude from, and to appoint and limit the Succession.

SUCH Causes have presented twice within our own Memory: Once at the Abdication of King James, when the Throne being declar'd vacant, William and Mary, the Prince and Princess of Orange, were, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons Assembled at Westminster, declar'd King and Queen of these Realms; and the Succession to the Crown, was limited to the Heirs of the Body of Her Majesty, and in Default of such Issue, to her Royal Highness the Princess Anne of Denmark, and the Heirs of her Body.

THE other Time was just before the Death of King William, of ever-blessed Memory: When for lack of Issue from Queen Mary by the said King William, and from her Royal Highness the Princess Anne of Denmark, and in Default of such Issue, the Princess Sophia, Electress and Dutchess Dowager of Hanover, was by Act of Parliament declar'd to be the next in Succession, in the Protestant Line, to the Imperial Crown and Dignity of these Realms, and the Succession now is, and stands limited to the said Princess Sophia and the Heirs of her Body, being Protestants.

By Virtue of these Dispositions, the Crown devolv'd on the Head of Queen Anne, upon the Death of King William, (which soon follow'd) and after her Demise, upon our Present most Gracious Lord and Sovereign King GEORGE, who according to the Laws for settling the Succession of the Crown, was, by Unanimous Consent, immediately proclaim'd KING of these Realms, invited to the Throne, came
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and took Possession of it accordingly, and was Recogniz'd by the States of the Kingdom.

— WHOSOEVER shall thus take a little Pains to consider the *Original* and *Foundation* of human Government, the *Nature* of the *English Constitution*, the *Custom* of our Parliaments, and the *Manner* by which King GEORGE came to the Throne; and on the other Hand, how little there is to found a Claim on Behalf of the Pretender, consider'd not only as a *Papist*, but as being attended with every Thing one could wish for to render him *Suppositions*; whosoever I say, shall calmly consider these Things, will, I persuade myself, find *sufficient Reason* to conclude that the Pretender has no Right to the Crown; but that King GEORGE has as full a Right as ever Prince was possess'd of, and consequently will have no Ground to scruple any part of the Oath of *Abjuration*, or to swear that he believes in his Conscience King GEORGE to be *Rightful and Lawful King* of these *Realms*, and that the Pretender has no Right or Title whatsoever.

THE great Stir and Noise that has been made about the Pretender is founded on a mere *Chimera*, at least with respect to the *English Government*, and has been trump'd up only to serve some Mens *private Ambition* and *Lusts*, or the Designs of our Enemies to destroy our *ancient Constitution*, in order to bring in *Popery* and *Slavery*, that is, the utmost Ruin and Misery upon us. And shall any for a mere empty *Fiction*, for a *Dream*, and a *Trifle*, go about to unhinge the best Government in the World? run all Things into *Disorder* and *Confusion*, stir up *Mobs* and *Tumults*, enter into actual *Rebellion*, sacrifice their *Estates*, *Lives* and *Religion* too, in order to dethrone

a Prince invested with the *firmest* Title possible; a Prince *so eminently* qualify'd for Government, *so stedfastly* determin'd to render *all his People happy* under his mild and just Administration, and that has been *so signally favour'd* by divine Providence, to set up One that has scarce the *Shadow* of a Title, who is of an *uncertain Original*, * of the *meanest Accomplishments*, and known to have been bred up in the Principles of *popish Superstition and Cruelty*; What can bespeak the Height of Folly and Madness, if this doth not?

AND what just Reason is there not only to *suspect*, but to *censure, condemn and abhor* the Principles and Designs of those Men, who with the *utmost Zeal* shall preach, and on Pain of *Damnation* press those *slavish Doctrines* of *unlimited passive Obedience and Non-resistance*, when it is to favour *French Measures*, in promoting *Popery and Arbitrary Power*. But shall act quite the *Reverse*, and leave no Methods unattempted to raise *Discontents, Divisions and Animosities*; nay, who shall not stick to encourage the foulest *Plots, Invasions, Assassinations and open Rebellion*, when it is to obstruct or deprive those of the *Crown*, who are known to be the *best Friends* to the *Protestant Religion* and our *English Liberties*. As the Practices of these Men are most justly detestable, so they do sufficiently convince us how *ill-qualified* they are to be intrusted with the *Care of our Souls*, or to direct in the *Management of our Civil Affairs*.

AFTER this, One would think no Man should scruple the Oaths to King GEORGE, but only impute his past Refusal to some fatal *Enchantment or other*; and for the future conclude, that whosoever shall

* Vid. Letter to Robert Walpole, Esq;

shall deny his Allegiance to the present Government, or give into those pernicious Measures that have been secretly carry'd on, and at last broke out into such open Violence, hath either lost the little Sense he was once possess'd of, or whatever Profession he makes of being a Protestant, he is in Truth but a Papist in Masquerade.

I have but one Thing more to add, and which respects their Duty, who have readily and heartily taken the Oaths. Now this is, That we take Care in all Things to execute to the utmost of our Power, the Obligations we have laid ourselves under. Otherwise (to allude to that of the Preacher) *It were better not to have vow'd at all, than having vow'd, not to perform.* This is by no Means a Matter of Indifference; for GOD having been solemnly invoc'd as Witness to our Intentions, His Honour is concern'd to see we religiously observe our Oaths, and if not, to punish the great Affront we have put upon Him. That every One may rightly discharge his Duty, we ought to consider the several Branches and Particulars of the Oaths, with the Nature and Extent of our Obligations, which done, it will direct us in our future Conduct and Behaviour. To instance, as I did before, in the Oath of Abjuration, there are Four Things which from hence will appear very evident.

THE first is, That it is our Duty to do what we can to reclaim such as we know to be ill-affected to the Person and Government of our Lawful Sovereign King GEORGE. For having faithfully promised, That we will to the utmost of our Power, support, maintain, and defend the Succession of the Crown, against
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the Pretender, and all other Persons whatsoever, doubtless this will be one of the best Ways of doing it. By every Person we reclaim, we draw off an Enemy, and add a Friend to the Protestant Succession; which must be a very great Support to it. This then is every One's Duty, so far as he hath Ability and Opportunity. But I mention this chiefly for the Sake of the Reverend Clergy, who remain true to the Protestant Interest, that They would exert their Zeal, as some have most worshipfully begun to do; that by Preaching, Printing, Conversation, and all the laudable Ways that can be, They would endeavour to undeceive the Minds of their People, to dispossess them of their Prejudices, and to recover their Affections to King GEORGE, that have been alienated by some of the vilest of Men, and the basest Methods that ever were practised.

The second is, That no Man who hath sworn to defend King GEORGE, to the utmost of his Power, can consistently with his Oath, give his Vote or Poll, or use his Power and Interest, to bring any Person into a Place of Publick Trust or Honour, that he knows, or has Reason to believe, is ill-affected to His Majesty King GEORGE, and the Protestant Succession; nor will any Relation, Alliance or temporal Dependence, be an Excuse for his so doing: But he is bound in pursuance of his Oath, to do what in him lies to shut him out of such Place, and deprive him of the Capacity of doing Hurt to His Majesty or His Administration. This has been clearly set forth in a late Paper seasonably publish'd by the Reverend Mr. Charles Lambe, and as I have been inform'd, with good Effect too.

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The *third* is, That if we know any Person to be *traiterously* designing, plotting, contriving or attempting any Thing against His Majesty's Person, Crown and Dignity, we are not to *conceal* it on any Account whatsoever ; but to make it *known*. This is what we are oblig'd to do by the Laws of God, antecedently to any Oath ; but *much more*, when we have *expressly* sworn that we will defend His Majesty King George, to the utmost of our Power, against all traiterous Conspiracies and Attempts whatsoever, and do our utmost Endeavour to disclose and make them known to His Majesty and his Successors. To conceal a Traitor to our Prince, is in itself (besides the breach of our Oath) a worse Crime, than to conceal a Man that would murder his own Father, and would make us Partners in the Guilt of all the Villany and Mischief which by our *Connivance*, he and others with him, might have an Opportunity to commit.

The *Last* is, That if we know a Man to have *prevaricated* in his Oaths, we are bound to discover and expose him, and especially, if he be One that by his Words and Actions, has given *unquestionable* Ground to believe he is in the Interests of the Pretender ; for these are of all, the worst of Men, and the worst of Enemies. They are in one Thing even worse than Judas, for he only *kiss'd* his Master, but these take an Oath to be true to theirs, when at the same time it is in their Heart to betray him. How do we perform our Oath in defending King GEORGE to the utmost of our Power, if we *conceal* these Men, and do not take some proper and prudent Methods to expose them. For a Man to *prevaricate* and make use of *Evasions* in his Oath, is such a Piece of Villany, that not only for God's Glory, but for the

common Safety of Mankind, every Body should express the *utmost Abhorrence* of it, and do all that is possible to deterr People from it. They who to betray our King and Country, shall not scruple to forswear themselves, what Security can we have that they will not do the same to rob us of our Possessions, and our Lives too, when an Opportunity and Temptation shall present. Wherefore, I am apprehensive it greatly beboves all the honest Citizens of London, and all the honest Men in the Kingdom, well to observe and remember such as have mark'd themselves out upon this Occasion, and to take diligent heed how they admit those into any Office, and most of all, into those of Sheriffs and Jurymen; for if such abandon'd Creatures as these, shall ever come to have the disposing of Mens Lives, the Lord have Mercy upon us.

F I N I S.

The OATHS.

I A. B. do sincerely Promise and Swear, That I will be Faithful, and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King GEORGE.

So help me God.

I A. B. do Swear, That I do from my Heart Abhor, Detest, and Abjure, as Impious and Heretical, that Damnable Doctrine and Position, That Princes Excommunicated or Deprived by the Pope, or any Authority of the See of Rome, may be Depos'd or Murther'd by their Subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do Declare, that no Foreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State, or Potentate, hath, or ought

or have any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence to Authority, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual, within this Realm.

So help me God.

I A. B. do truly and sincerely Acknowledge, Profess, Testify, and Declare in my Conscience, before G O D and the World, That Our Sovereign Lord King G E O R G E is Lawful and Rightful King of this REALM, and all other His Majesty's Dominions and Countries thereunto belonging: And I do solemnly and sincerely Declare, That I do believe in my Conscience, that the Person pretended to be Prince of W A L E S during the Life of the late King James, and since his Decease pretending to be, and taking upon himself the Stile and Title of King of England, by the Name of James the Third; or of Scotland, by the Name of James the Eighth, or the Stile and Title of King of Great Britain, hath not any Right or Title whatsoever to the Crown of this Realm, or any other Dominions thereto belonging. And I do Renounce, Refuse, and Abjure any Allegiance or Obedience to him.

And I do Swear, That I will bear Faith and true Allegiance to His Majesty King G E O R G E, and Him will defend to the utmost of my Power, against all Traiterous Conspiracies and Attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against His Person, Crown or Dignity. And I will do my utmost Endeavour to disclose and make known to His Majesty, and His Successors, all Treasons and Traiterous Conspiracies which I shall know to be against Him, or any of them. And I do faithfully promise, to the utmost of my Power, to support, maintain and defend the Succession of the Crown against him the said James, and all other Persons whatsoever; which Succession, by an Act, Intituled. *An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better Securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject*, is, and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress and Dutches Dowager of Hanover, and the Heirs of Her Body, being Protestants. And all these Things I do plainly and sincerely Acknowledge and Swear, according to these express Words by me spoken, and according to the plain and common Sense and Understanding of the same Words, without any Equivocation, mental Evasion, or secret Reservation whatsoever. And I do make this Recognition, Acknowledgment, Abjuration and Promise, heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true Faith of a Christian.

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F I N I S.

So help me God.